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VOID RIVALS
image
#09

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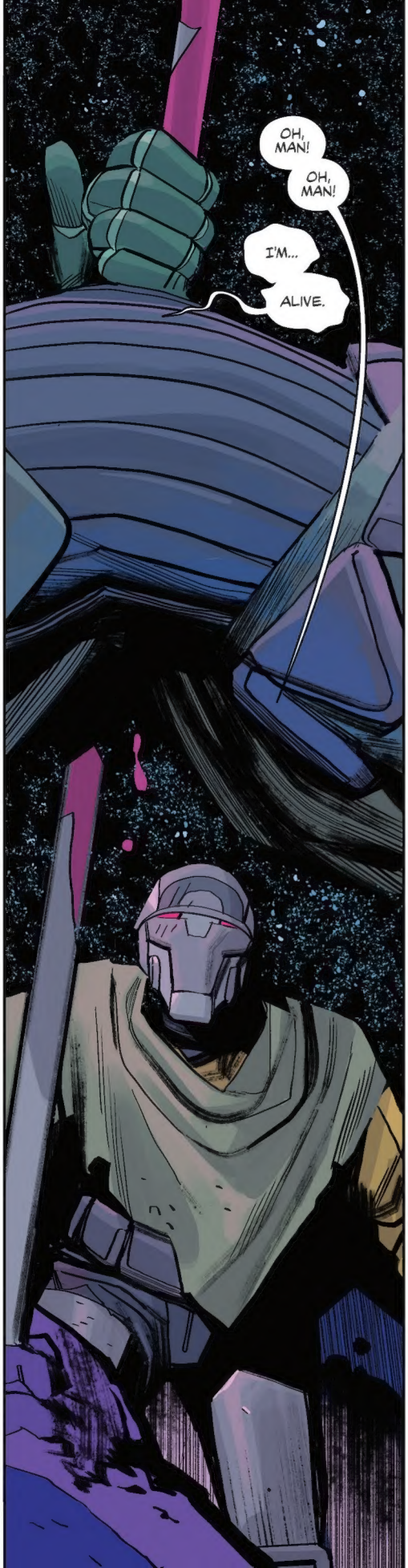

OH, MAN!
OH, MAN!
I'M...
ALIVE.

I DON'T KNOW WHAT TO DO...
THE SPEAR APPEARS TO HAVE FUSED WITH HER ARMOR DUE TO THE SPEED AT WHICH IT WAS THROWN.
SHE'S NOT LOSING MUCH BLOOD.

HOLD.
ON.

UGH.
ZWSH

WHUMP

RETRACTED MY SPEAR... TO SEAL THE WOUND AS BEST I COULD. AS LONG AS IT STAYS IN PLACE, MY BLEEDING SHOULD BE MINIMAL.
I HOPE YOUR "OASIS" HAS MEDICAL CAPABILITIES... AND IS CLOSE.
ME, TOO. CAN YOU WALK?
WITH... SOME ASSISTANCE.
THE GOOD NEWS IS THE SOLAR WINDSTORM GOT US MUCH CLOSER TO THE WASTELAND'S MIDPOINT...
AND HOPEFULLY VERY FAR AWAY FROM PROXIMUS.
PLEASE DON'T SAY THAT NAME.
A RARE-- MOMENT OF-- AGREEMENT.

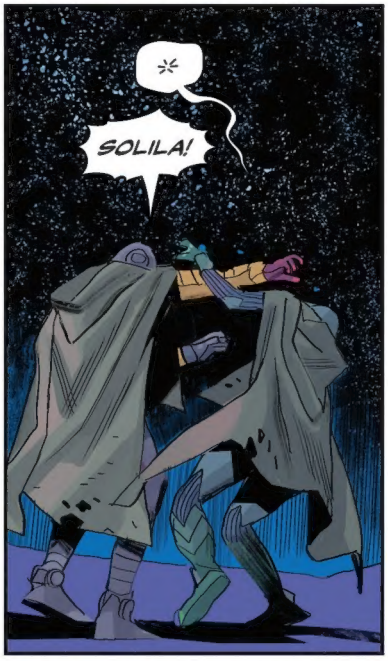
WHEW!
WHAT A TRIP!
LORDY.

BEEP
VIISH
KIDS! HONEY?!
DADDY'S HOME!

HELLO?
...
OH.
FORGOT.

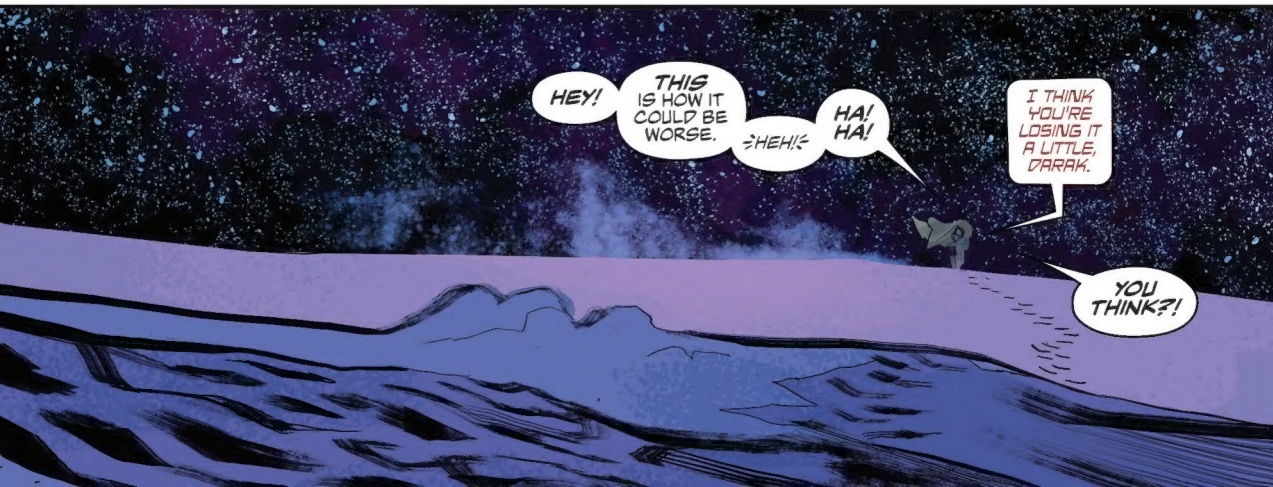
IT JUST NEVER GETS ANY EASIER.

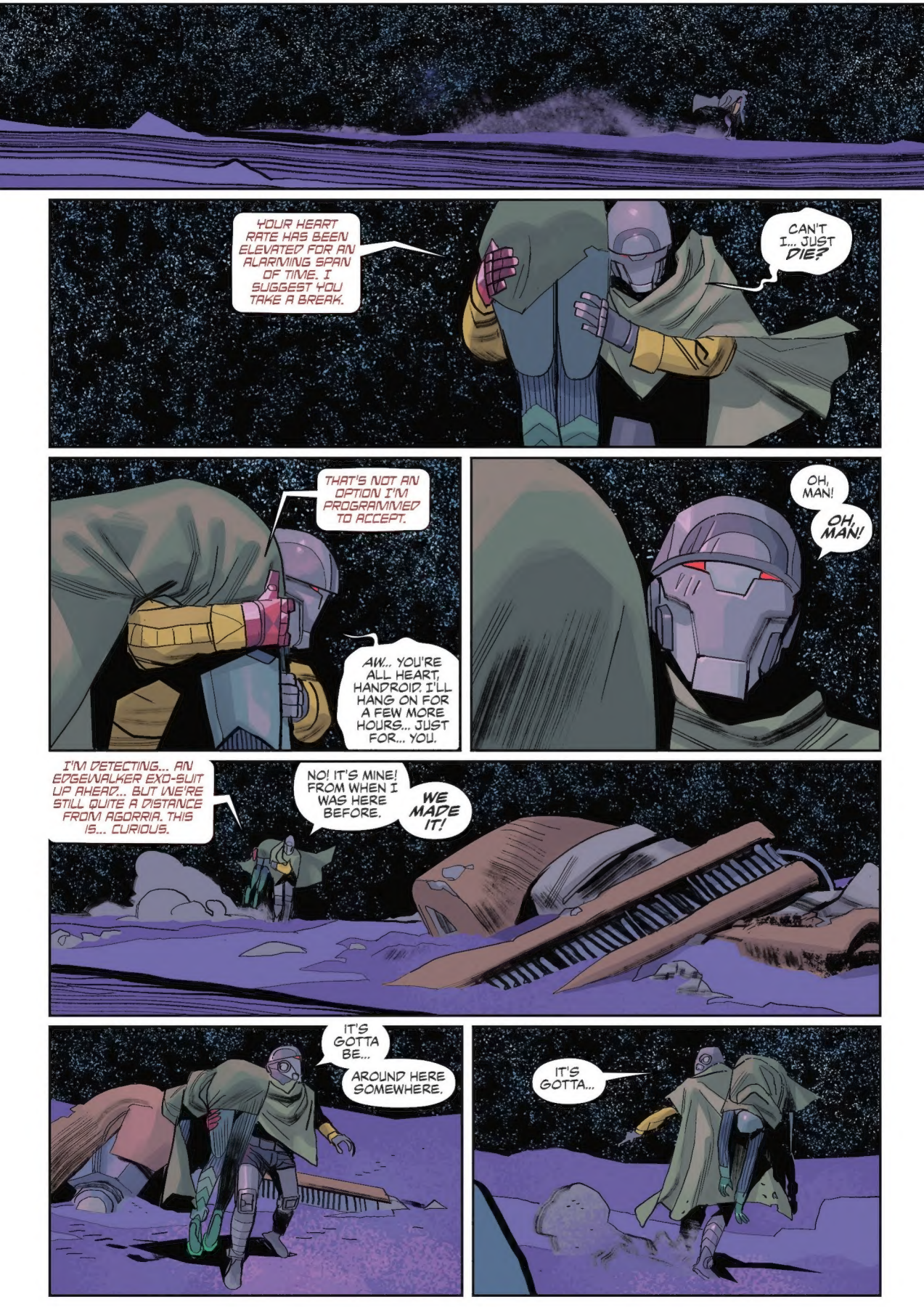
IT COULD BE WORSE.
I'M HAVING TROUBLE THINKING OF EXACTLY HOW, BUT THAT DOESN'T MEAN IT COULDN'T--

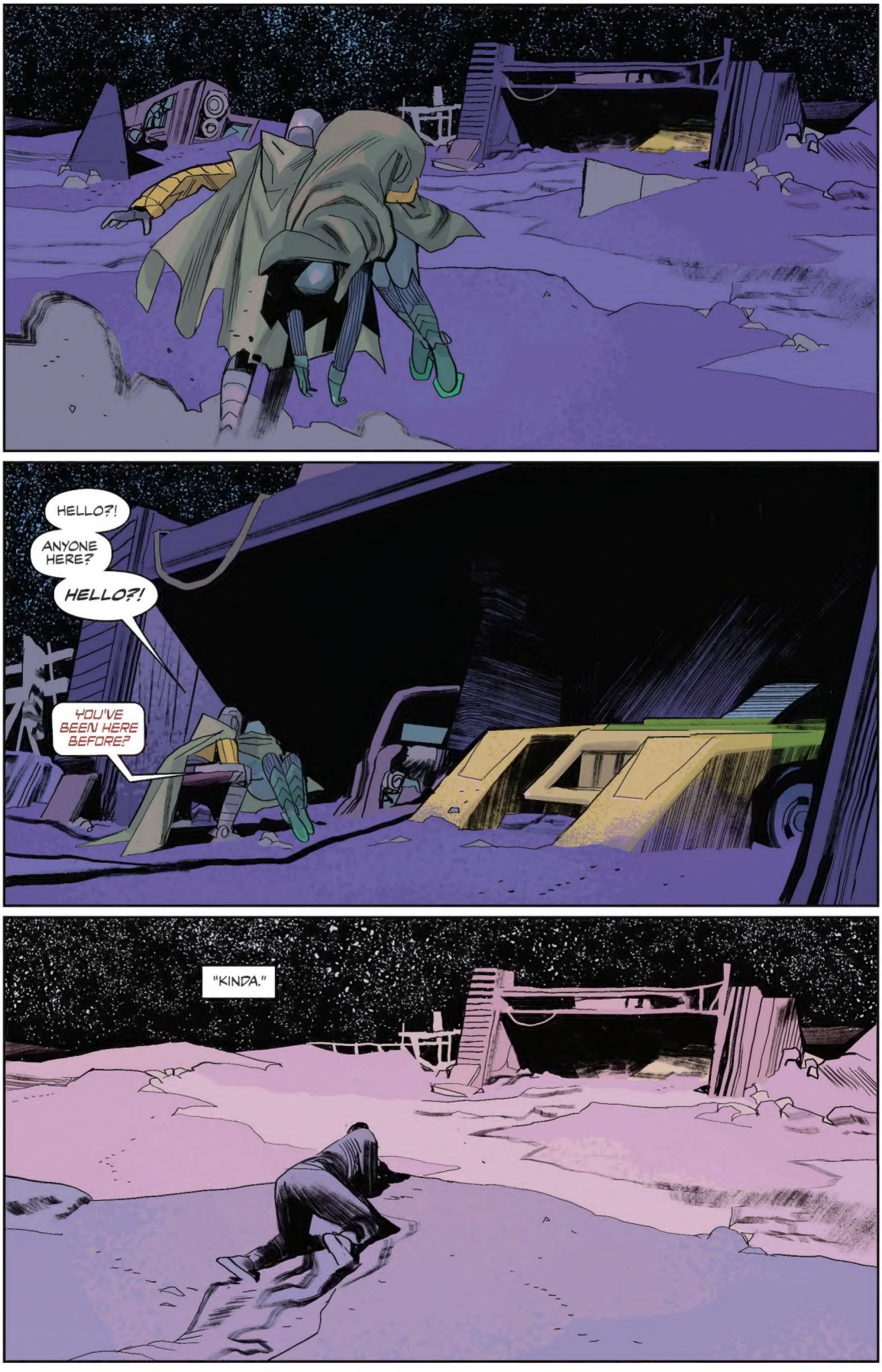

SOLILA!

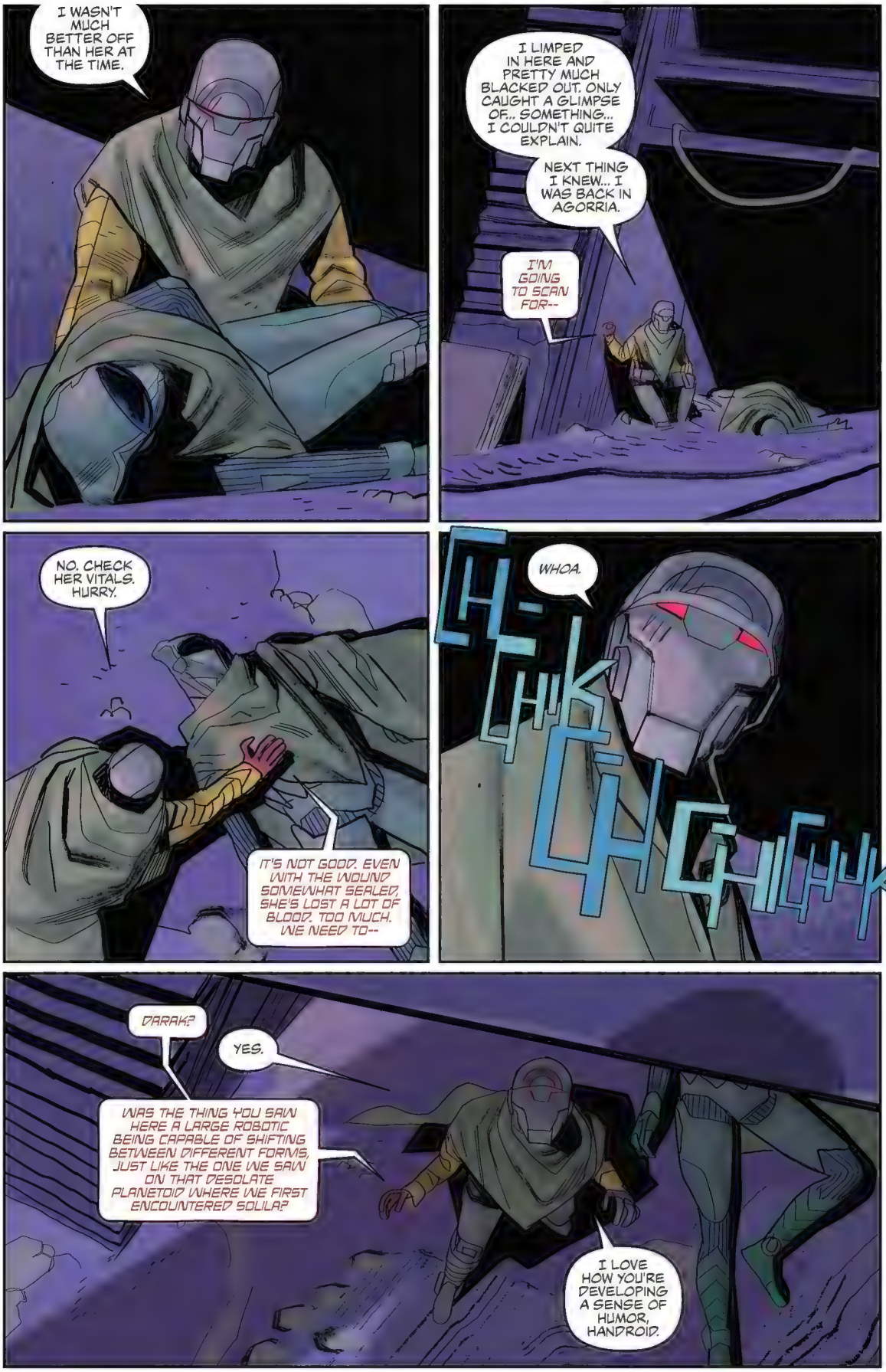
I GOT YOU.
OH, MAN...

I--
UNGH!
--GOT YOU.
DON'T TAKE THIS THE WRONG WAY... BUT YOU ARE SO HEAVY.

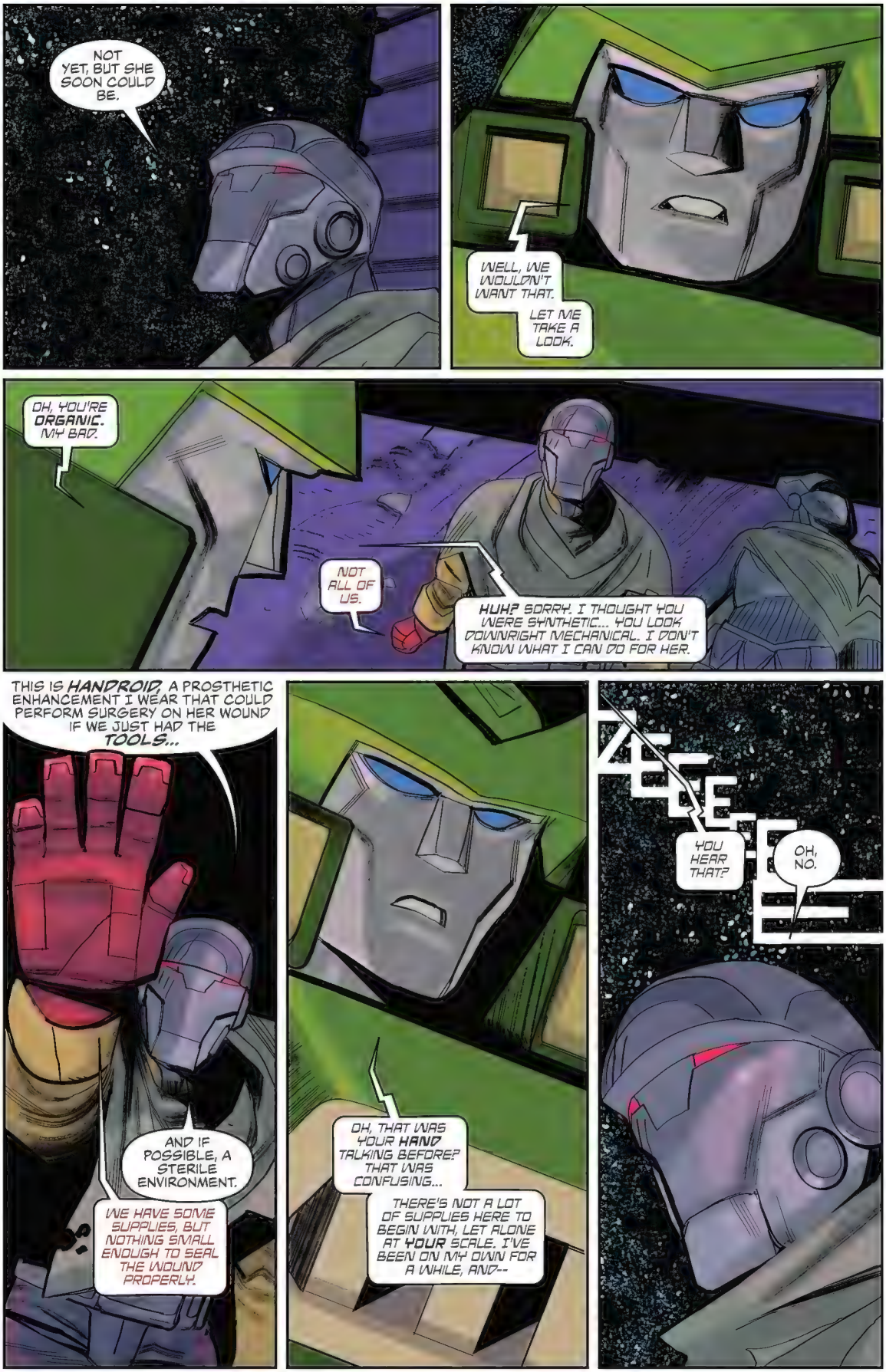

HEY!
THIS IS HOW IT COULD BE WORSE.
HEH!
HA! HA!
I THINK YOU'RE LOSING IT A LITTLE, DARAK.
YOU THINK?!


YOUR HEART RATE HAS BEEN ELEVATED FOR AN ALARMING SPAN OF TIME. I SUGGEST YOU TAKE A BREAK.
CAN'T I... JUST DIE?
THAT'S NOT AN OPTION I'M PROGRAMMED TO ACCEPT.
AW... YOU'RE ALL HEART, HANDROID. I'LL HANG ON FOR A FEW MORE HOURS... JUST FOR... YOU.
OH, MAN!
OH, MAN!
I'M DETECTING... AN EDGEWALKER EXO-SUIT UP AHEAD... BUT WE'RE STILL QUITE A DISTANCE FROM AGORRIA. THIS IS... CURIOUS.
NO! IT'S MINE! FROM WHEN I WAS HERE BEFORE.
WE MADE IT!
IT'S GOTTA BE...
AROUND HERE SOMEWHERE.
IT'S GOTTA...


HELLO?!
ANYONE HERE?
HELLO?!
YOU'VE BEEN HERE BEFORE?
"KINDA."


I WASN'T MUCH BETTER OFF THAN HER AT THE TIME.
I LIMPED IN HERE AND PRETTY MUCH BLACKED OUT. ONLY CAUGHT A GLIMPSE OF... SOMETHING... I COULDN'T QUITE EXPLAIN.
NEXT THING I KNEW... I WAS BACK IN AGORRIA.
I'M GOING TO SCAN FOR--
NO. CHECK HER VITALS. HURRY.
IT'S NOT GOOD. EVEN WITH THE WOUND SOMEWHAT SEALED, SHE'S LOST A LOT OF BLOOD. TOO MUCH. WE NEED TO--
WHOA.
CH-CHK CHCHCHCHK
DARAK?
YES.
WAS THE THING YOU SAW HERE A LARGE ROBOTIC BEING CAPABLE OF SHIFTING BETWEEN DIFFERENT FORMS, JUST LIKE THE ONE WE SAW ON THAT DESOLATE PLANETOID WHERE WE FIRST ENCOUNTERED SOLILA?
I LOVE HOW YOU'RE DEVELOPING A SENSE OF HUMOR, HANDROID.

YOU DON'T SEEM AS SURPRISED TO SEE ME FOR THE FIRST TIME AS MOST BEINGS ARE.
WAIT-- IS THAT ONE DEAD?


NOT YET, BUT SHE SOON COULD BE.
WELL, WE WOULDN'T WANT THAT.
LET ME TAKE A LOOK.
OH, YOU'RE ORGANIC. MY BAD.
NOT ALL OF US.
HUH? SORRY. I THOUGHT YOU WERE SYNTHETIC... YOU LOOK DOWNRIGHT MECHANICAL. I DON'T KNOW WHAT I CAN DO FOR HER.
THIS IS HANDROID, A PROSTHETIC ENHANCEMENT I WEAR THAT COULD PERFORM SURGERY ON HER WOUND IF WE JUST HAD THE TOOLS...
AND IF POSSIBLE, A STERILE ENVIRONMENT.
WE HAVE SOME SUPPLIES, BUT NOTHING SMALL ENOUGH TO SEAL THE WOUND PROPERLY.
OH, THAT WAS YOUR HAND TALKING BEFORE? THAT WAS CONFUSING...
THERE'S NOT A LOT OF SUPPLIES HERE TO BEGIN WITH, LET ALONE AT YOUR SCALE. I'VE BEEN ON MY OWN FOR A WHILE, AND--
YOU HEAR THAT?
OH, NO.

BOT
SCREECH
CRASH

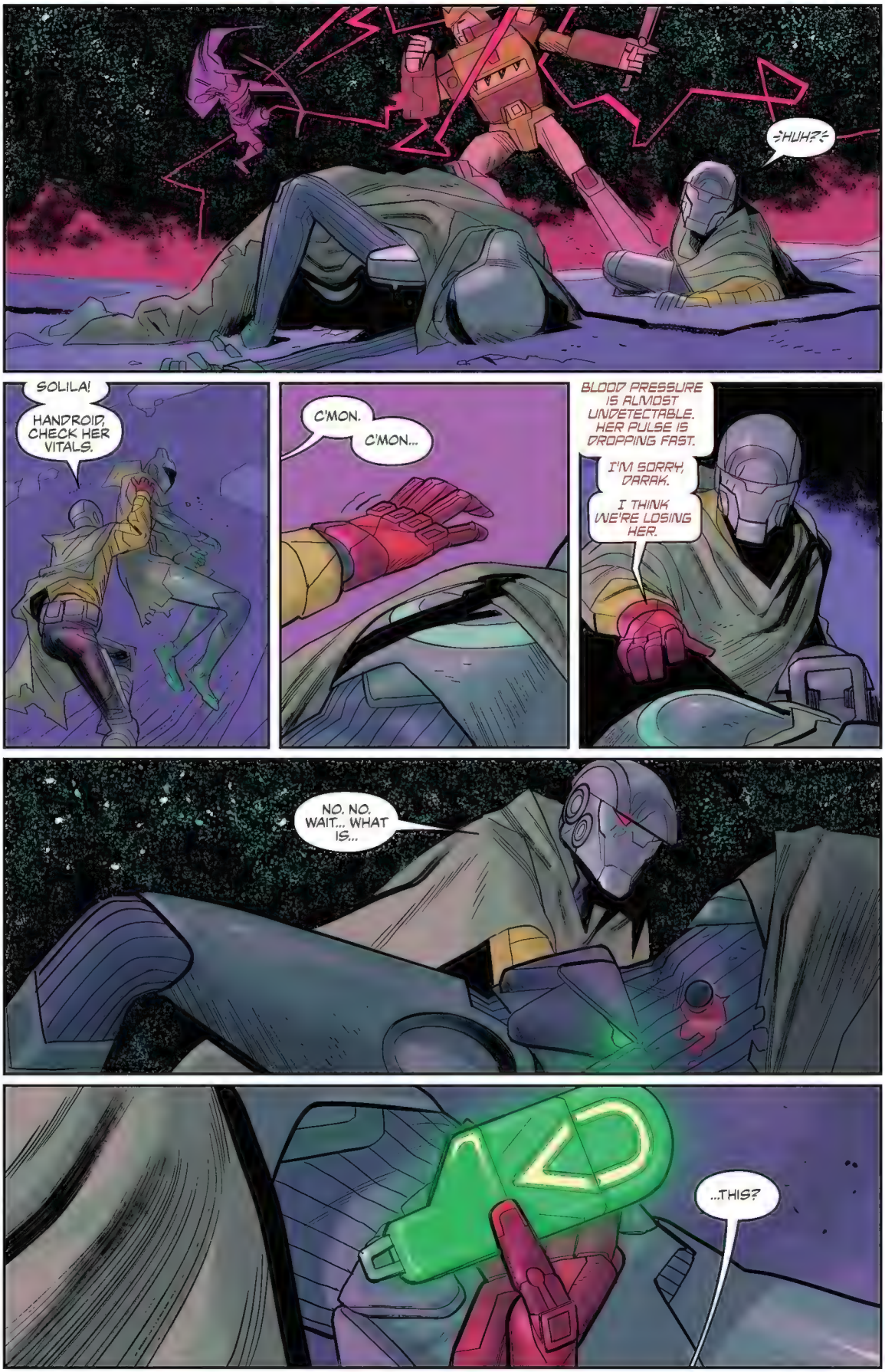
WHAT THE HELL WAS THAT?
THAT GUY IS TRYING TO KILL US!
WHAT GUY?!
SHRAKK
OH.
HE'S JUST A LITTLE GUY LIKE YOU.
WAIT.
ARE YOU BOTH DEAD NOW?! CAN THE HAND HEAR ME?! ANYONE?!
BOOM
DO YOU THINK I'M NOT DESERVING OF YOUR FULL ATTENTION, CREATURE?!
OKAY.
THAT WAS... UNWISE.

I'D LIKE TO SEE YOU TRY THAT AGAIN.
YOUR SIZE DOES NOT INTIMIDATE ME.
FUNNY.
SAME.

TOO SMALL TO BE SO--
AGCK!!
ENOUGH OF THIS!
VAPP VAPP
VOOM
OKAY... MIGHT HAVE TO TAKE YOU A LIIIITTLE MORE SERIOUSLY.
EMPHASIS ON LITTLE.
SWISSS
TOO BIG TO MOVE THAT FAST!
VOMP
=ACK!=

KLANK
SERIOUSLY?!
HOW?!
I MEAN IT.
ANSWER ME!
...
KLAK

VAP VAP
THAP
VA CT
VAP VAP


>HUH?<
SOLILA!
HANDROID, CHECK HER VITALS.
C'MON.
C'MON...
BLOOD PRESSURE IS ALMOST UNDETECTABLE. HER PULSE IS DROPPING FAST.
I'M SORRY, DARAK.
I THINK WE'RE LOSING HER.
NO. NO. WAIT... WHAT IS...
...THIS?

QUINTESSA.
OUR TIME IS HIGHLY VALUED.
YOU HAVE CALLED US HERE.
IT BETTER BE FOR A GOOD REASON.
OR ELSE.
YES, YOUR HONOR. WE HAVE EXAMINED THE METAL OF THIS VESSEL YOU ACQUIRED, AND A SIGNIFICANT PORTION OF IT IS OF A VERY RARE AND CURIOUS ALLOY TO BE SURE.
THIS ALLOY CONTAINS TRACES OF A FORMULA THAT DATES BACK TO... ANCIENT CYBERTRON.
THIS "ZERTONIA" THE SKUXXOID MENTIONED... WE BELIEVE IT COULD BE CONNECTED TO...
...ZERTA TRION.
...

SPEAKING THAT NAME HAS LONG BEEN FORBIDDEN.

TALK TO THE HANDROID

SEND YOUR QUESTIONS TO VOIDRIVALS@SKYBOUND.COM

HOW COOL WAS THIS ISSUE?! Springer vs Proximus: Round One! I hope y'all enjoyed reading it as much as Robert, Lorenzo, Patricio and Rus loved making it…and welcome to another installment of Talk to the Handroid, with your editorial co-host, Ben!

And writer co-host, Robert! I just want to take a moment to thank you all for all your support and the work you're putting in spreading the word of the ENERGON UNIVERSE. It's put us in the enviable position of being able to say, without hyperbole, that you've made this line of books the hottest thing in comics right now. How crazy is that? The sales on all four of our series are just absolutely blowing doors off (of something) and it's really awesome to be on the inside of something like this. So thank you! We're hard at work planning out year two (and three [and four]) and there's a lot of cool stuff ahead. We promise we won't let you down!

We've got a mailbag that's overflowing each month, so please keep those letters coming. We love being able to talk to fans directly and answer whatever questions or concerns you may have. So enough delay, let's answer some mail, shall we?!

• • • • • • • • • • • • • • •

Hey Robert,

Issue 7 is right beside me and I just need to say how much I love the world building you're doing. I wonder what Transformer Proximus first encounters! (Cover of #9 spoiler perhaps?)

As the first Void Rivals arc came to a close, and we saw Darak and Solila's peoples had been turned against each other long ago, I was getting some major Big Broadcast of 2006/Quintesson Journal vibes. Is it just me, gang?

Can't wait to see where this all leads, and I'm curious if any unused ideas you pitched for The Last Knight will find a new home? If not I'll settle for Skuxxoid's Day Off. Haha. Regardless, I'm proud to say I'm a card-carrying member of the EUU - Energon Universe University!

'Til All Are One
Mark J. Schultis

Love the E.U.U. and I hope we broke your heart with Skuzzoid's appearance in this issue, Mark!

Mark! You must be referring to my brief stint in the Transformers movie writer's room prior to The Last Knight movie. Unfortunately I was only able to spend 1 single day in that room before a minor medical emergency took me out. (I had to get throat surgery in a hurry in the hopes that I wouldn't miss Comic-Con that year and then ended up having to miss it anyway-is the short version). So I never even got to pitch any ideas. It was a real disappointment. I will say some of the things I wanted to pitch might at some point in the future make their way into the TRANSFORMERS book, but we'll see.

• • • • • • • • • • • • • • •

Misters Kirkman, De Felici, and co:

Congratulations on taking what could have been a mere gimmick of tying an original concept to Transformers and GI Joe and launching an original storyline from it! I love all of the robotic designs, but Proximus from issue 7 might be my favorite. Intimidating and fragile! Ultimate power and total defeat. What a figure! When the team was designing this corner of the universe, what thought processes went into it? Are y'all thinking about toys and television shows that might last into the 2060s as the Transformers and

Joes have lasted into the present? I'm excited to keep exploring the weird and alien, so please let your freak flags fly!

Spike Stonehand
Houston, TX

Lorenzo's designs are always inspiring and absolutely cool--a true master!

Why do these pesky writers respond to these letters even when it's clearly a question for the artists? Well... because I usually wait until the last minute to crack these things open and there's no time to get a response from our Italian Dynamo.

So like all things... blame my incompetence.

Personally, I'm trying to throw as many cool concepts into this thing as I can with the hopes that I am watching a Void Rivals cartoon in 2060. I'm really just seeing this as a challenge to try and create something on-par with Transformers and G.I. Joe. I know that if we succeed only a small fraction in comparison we'll still end up with something pretty cool. And, oh, wait... what's this... scooting in at the last minute from the streets of Rome, it's Lorenzo De Felici!

Hey Spike! First of all, thanks a lot! Proximus was the character that went through more design iterations than any other in the series. The balance between what you call "intimidation and fragility" was a hard one to hit! But yeah, we're very happy with the result, and for me drawing him is always a treat. Hopefully you'll be able to take a peek at the sketches for the whole design process in some future Void Rivals hardcover or something. Right guys?

Now don't go spoiling future plans, Lorenzo! We'll just have to see.

I'm currently collecting Transformers, Duke, and Cobra Commander along with VR, which says a lot because I don't have a very long pull list. Well done.

Awesome to hear!!

I'm a longtime DC fan, but my all-time favorite comic is Mignola's Hellboy at Dark Horse. Energon seems to be building a similar mix of pulpy, hard luck, relatable hero goodness. I can see the war comic and sci-fi influences, but there have been hints of creepy, mysterious magic, too. So, my first question is, will we see any horror?

There's a bit of horror to Cobra Commander's story and I think we'll probably see a little more as time goes on.

On a related note, Solila's interest in Darak's vision in issue 7, along with the way she fights gives her a mystic Jedi warrior vibe. Like the flashback to Darak working on the robot loaders in the wasteland, will we get to see any flashbacks of Solila's training, maybe even with Mistress Vill?

Finally, the Handroid is awesome. Is Darak his first wearer?

Thanks,

Matt S.
Oregon

We're thrilled to hear of you allegiance to the slate of EU titles-and we won't let you down! I was a big fan of the Mignola-verse with Hellboy and the B.P.R.D. so that's high praise, thank you! And I think we'll see a bit more about Solila's training days very soon.

To your Handroid question... stay tuned. We'll get to learn more about how Handroid's work and how they are assigned in a future issue. Will there be an ALL HANDROID flashback issue? Only if you DEMAND IT, Energon Believers!

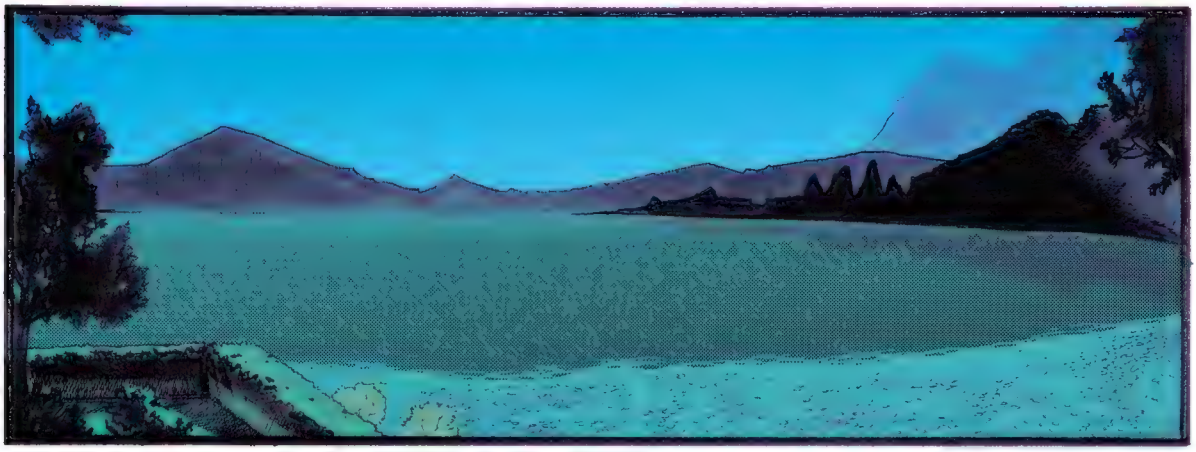
. . . . . .

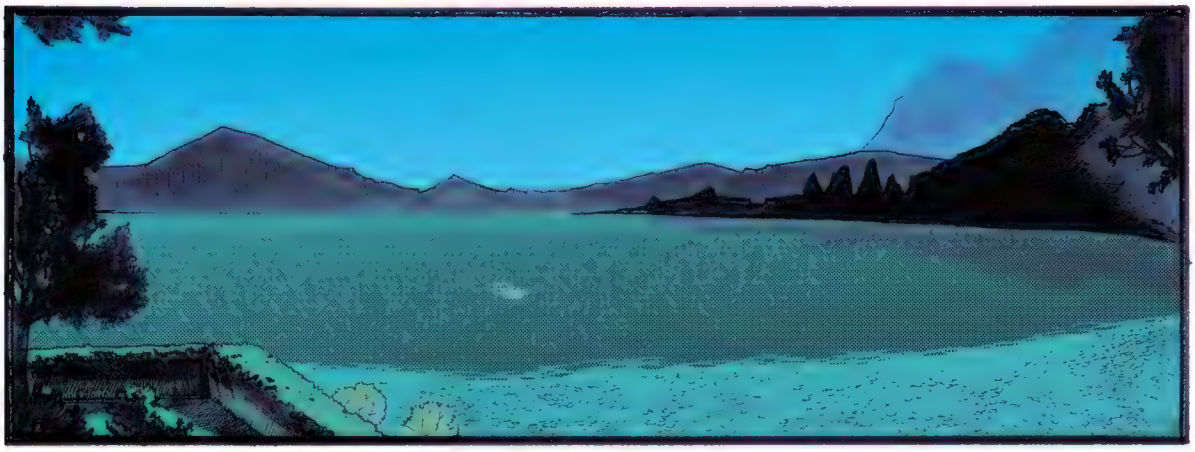
Hi Void Rivals Team,

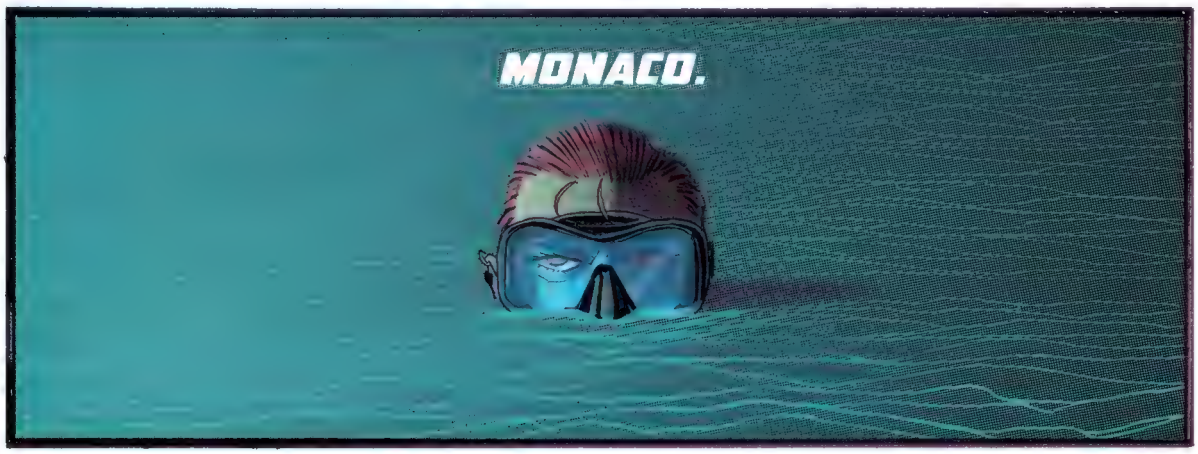
I started reading Void Rivals because I loved Oblivion Song. I've never been a fan of GI Joe or Transformers, but something about how you all have mixed the different series into one Energon Universe-and recruited such great creators-has really hooked me. Now,

Thanks for writing in! We're very excited to see you all back here next month for more VOID RIVALS! Now go read TRANSFORMERS, DUKE and COBRA COMMANDER! And get ready for DESTRO and SCARLETT very soon…in fact, enjoy the following SCARLETT preview!!!

-Robert Kirkman





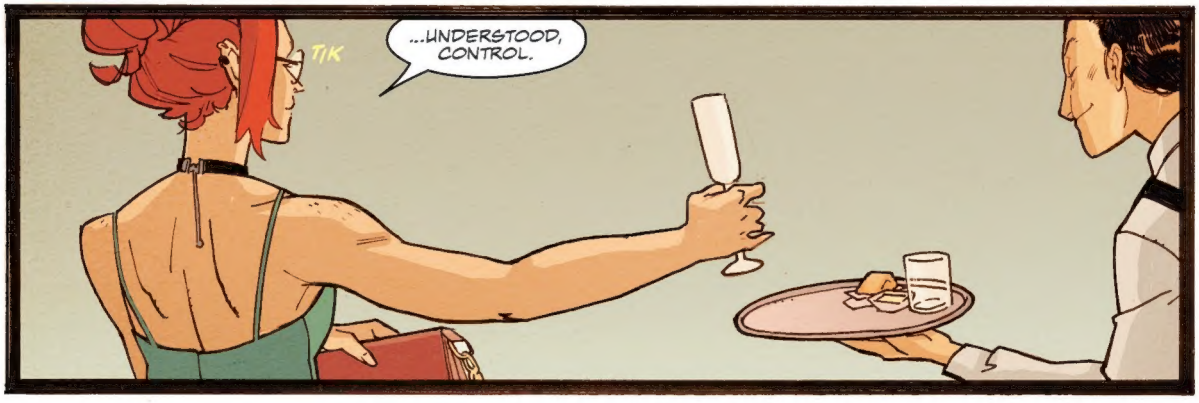

MONACO.

ZHIP

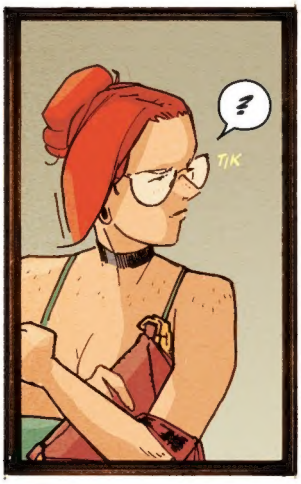
CH-CHLICK

SCARLETT IN POSITION.
TIK
COPY THAT, AGENT.
SECURITY IS... EXTREMELY HEAVY. ARE WE CERTAIN THE HOSTAGES ARE NOT ON SITE? COULD THIS BE THE ACTUAL BUY?

INTEL SAYS NO. BUT EVEN IF THE ASSETS WERE ON SITE, AGENT, THAT'S NOT YOUR PURVIEW.
YOU'RE THERE TO GATHER EVIDENCE AND CONFIRM BUYERS, IF POSSIBLE. INVESTIGATION, **NOT** ENGAGEMENT.


TIK
...UNDERSTOOD, CONTROL.

BUYER **"BARTLEBY"**, IDENT CONFIRMED.
COPY THAT.


?
TIK

CONTROL, I RECOGNIZE THIS SYMBOL, BUT CAN'T PLACE IT...
RECEIVED.

CODENAME G.I. JOE CONTINUES
SCARLETT
Red-hot writer KELLY THOMPSON (DC's Birds of Prey) and artist MARCO FERRARI (Frontiersman) introduce some of the most anticipated characters to the Energon Universe.
ON SALE JUNE 5, 2024
image
Hasbro
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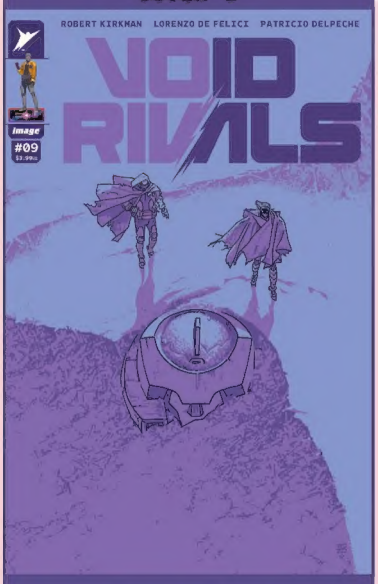

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